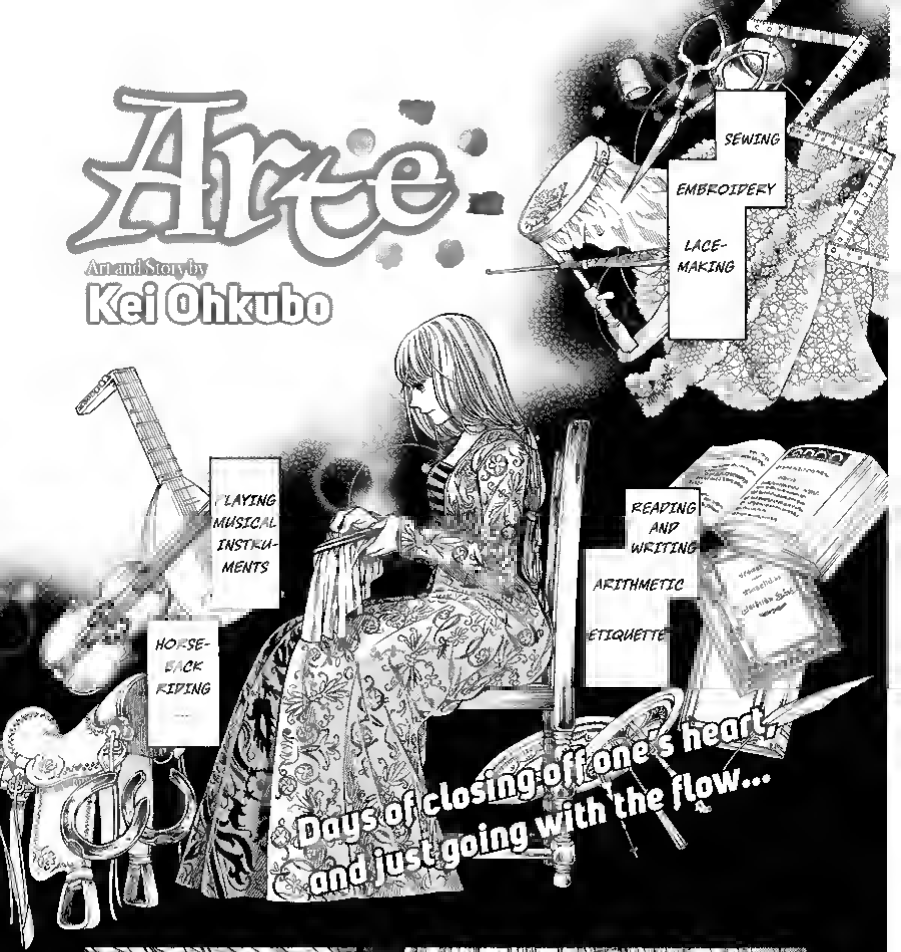
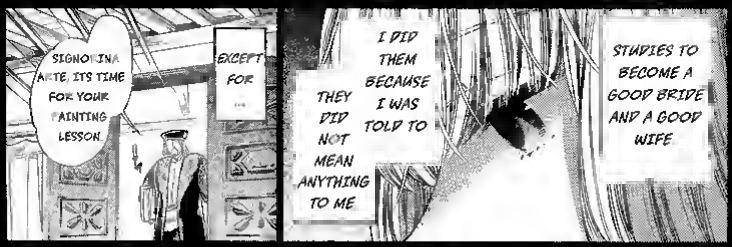
Arte

Art and Story by
Kei Ohkubo




SIGNORINA ARTE, IT'S TIME FOR YOUR PAINTING LESSON.
EXCEPT FOR ...
THEY DID NOT MEAN ANYTHING TO ME
I DID THEM BECAUSE I WAS TOLD TO
STUDIES TO BECOME A GOOD BRIDE AND A GOOD WIFE

SUMMARY: ARTE HAS BEGUN WORK AT LEO'S WORKSHOP. AT FIRST, LEO SEEMS A COLD AND DISTANT MASTER, BUT HIS EQUAL TREATMENT OF MEN AND WOMEN EARNS ARTE'S TRUST.

HER ONLY JOY WAS PUTTING HER BRUSH TO CANVAS,
AND LETTING HER IMAGINATION RUN WILD.

YOU HIRED ANOTHER PAINTING TEACHER FOR ARTE AGAIN, DIDN'T YOU?
WHAT'S THE CHARM OF A GIRL WHO'S ONLY GOOD AT DRAWING?
IT'S COMPLETELY MEANINGLESS!
I THOUGHT I ASKED YOU TO STOP THAT.
IT'S WORTHLESS FOR HER FUTURE.
NO
DON'T SPEAK LIKE THAT.
SO YOU SEE...
I LOVE WATCHING THAT TWINKLE IN HER EYES.
THE ONLY TIME HER EYES TWINKLE IS WHEN SHE DRAWS.
THAT GIRL'S EYES LOOK LIKE THOSE OF A BAIT FISH WHATEVER WE MAKE HER DO.

IF SHE CONTINUES TO BELIEVE IN HERSELF AND STAND STRONG,
I'M SURE ONE DAY A MAN OTHER THAN ME WILL TAKE NOTICE OF HER CHARM.

FATHER...
IT'S BECAUSE YOU'RE LIKE THIS THAT SHE'S...
TRULY!
JUST LIKE YOU TO SPEAK SUCH NONSENSE AGAIN!

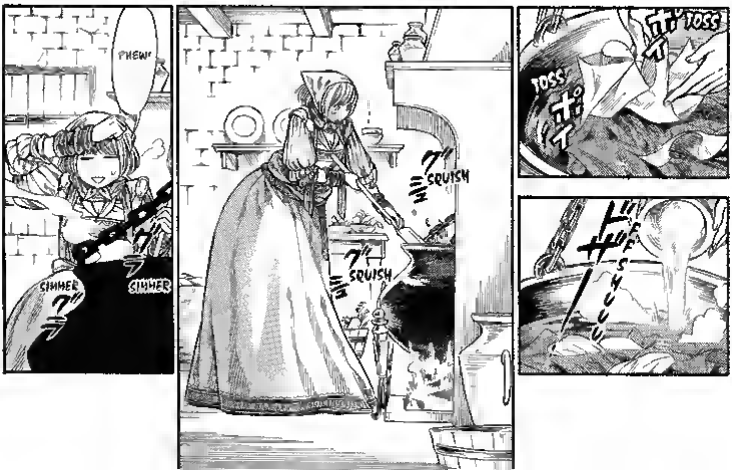
THANK YOU

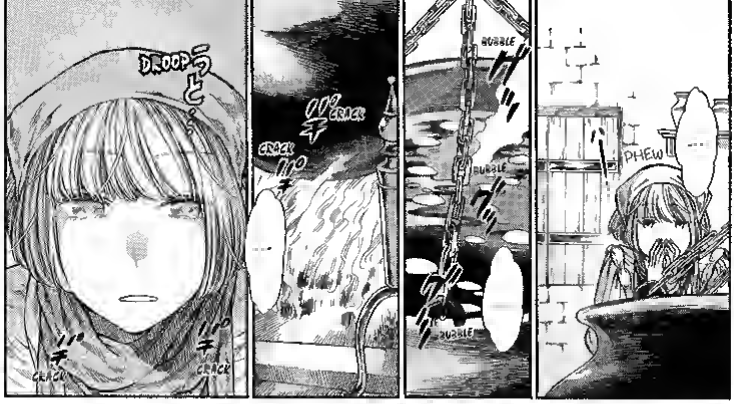
SHIVER
BRRR
YA-AWN
RISE
IT'S COLD!
IT'S BEEN 6 MONTHS SINCE I BECAME AN APPRENTICE IN MASTER LEO'S WORKSHOP
THE SEASON HAS NOW TURNED TO WINTER.

ASH!
WHO WANTS TO BUY ASH?
ASH! PERFECT FOR WASHING OUT DIRTY STAINS!

YES!
OVER HERE!
I'LL HAVE SOME PLEASE
THANK YOU!
THE SAME AS USUAL MISS?

CREAK
IT'S HEAVY!
CREAK
HUFF
HUFF
DRIP
DRIP
HERE WE GO!
SPLASH


PHEW!
SIMMER
SIMMER
SQUISH
SQUISH
TOSS
TOSS

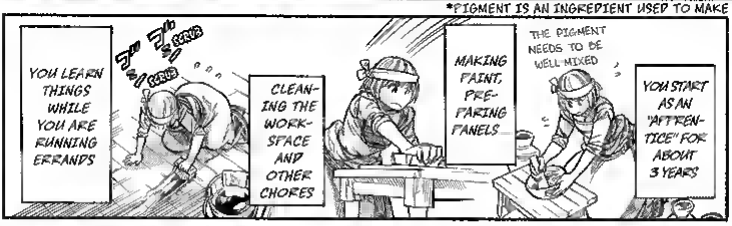

DROOP
うと
CRACK
CRACK
CRACK
CRACK
BUBBLE
BUBBLE
BUBBLE
PHEW
...

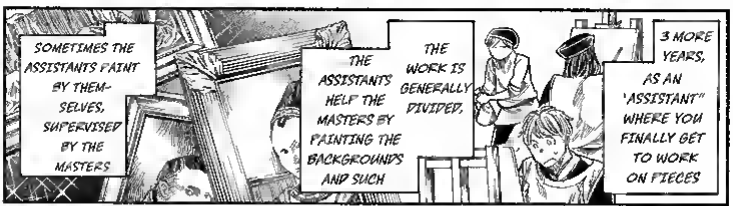
SORRY MASTER !
SO-
IT S DANGER-OUS
DON T SLEEP NEAR THE FIRE
HEY

IT S BEEN HALF A YEAR SINCE I STARTED MY APPRENTICE SHIP AT THE WORKSHOP I HAVE BEEN BUSY EVERY MONTH
SNAP
ビシ!
OK!
LEAVE IT TO ME
I WROTE DOWN WHAT I NEED ON THIS PIECE OF PAPER.
WHEN THAT LAUNDRY IS DONE GO SHOPPING

IN ORDER TO BECOME A PAINTER YOU HAVE TO GO THROUGH SEVERAL STEPS
MAYBE I'LL GO TO THE PHARMACY TO PICK UP SOME PIGMENT*
LET'S SEE

*PIGMENT IS AN INGREDIENT USED TO MAKE PAINT


YOU LEARN THINGS WHILE YOU ARE RUNNING ERRANDS
CLEANING THE WORKSPACE AND OTHER CHORES
MAKING PAINT, PREPARING PANELS...
THE PIGMENT NEEDS TO BE WELL MIXED
YOU START AS AN "APPRENTICE" FOR ABOUT 3 YEARS


SOMETIMES THE ASSISTANTS PAINT BY THEMSELVES, SUPERVISED BY THE MASTERS
THE ASSISTANTS HELP THE MASTERS BY PAINTING THE BACKGROUNDS AND SUCH
THE WORK IS GENERALLY DIVIDED,
3 MORE YEARS, AS AN "ASSISTANT" WHERE YOU FINALLY GET TO WORK ON PIECES

EVEN THEN, A LOT OF MASTERS ARE SO POOR THEY HAVE TO FIND WORK AT SOMEONE ELSE'S WORKSHOP
LIFE IS HARD
THEN YOU CAN LIVE YOUR LIFE AS A RESPECTABLE PAINTER
POSING
I started at the bottom too you know
ONCE YOU HAVE GONE THROUGH THESE STEPS THE GUILD WILL FINALLY RECOGNIZE YOU AS A "MASTER".

SO HERE I AM IN THE MIDDLE OF MY APPRENTICE-SHIP
I WOULD LIKE SOME PIGMENT PLEASE!
WHAT !!?
ERR
I WAS SAYING
C-CAN YOU REPEAT WHAT YOU JUST SAID?
HUHS
A LONG ROAD
ASSISTANT
HARDEN TREE
THAT S
THAT S
IS GOING TO BE
PAINTED BY YOU
A PART OF THE BACKGROUND OF THIS PANEL

A GREAT LEAP FORWARD!
YES!
...
IS IT OK? I REALLY HAVE ONLY BEEN AN APPRENTICE FOR 6 MONTHS
OH, SO THAT'S WHAT YOU MEANT
I THOUGHT YOU WENT CRAZY OR SOMETHING.
YOU ALREADY STUDIED PAINTING SO YOU'VE MORE OR LESS MASTERED THE BASICS
KEEPING YOU AN APPRENTICE WILL PROBABLY JUST BE A WASTE OF TIME
BESIDES
YOU'RE GETTING A LITTLE OLD
16 YEARS OLD
CLANG
MOST APPRENTICES START AROUND THE AGE OF 13
START WITH A SKETCH
DRAW IT WITH DETAIL ON SOME PAPER. AND SHOW IT TO ME
IF YOU GOT THAT, THEN GET GOING
RIGHT AWAY!
I'M SO HAPPY!!

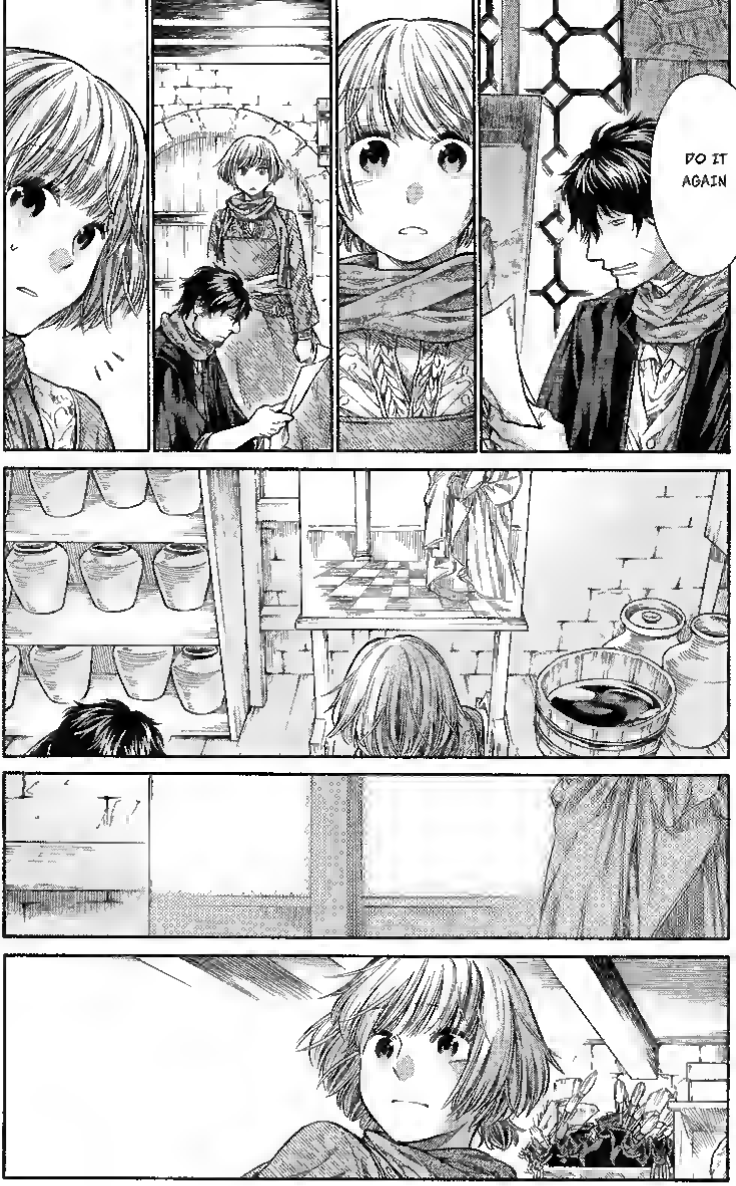
THE ASSIGNED DRAWING IS A LANDSCAPE FEATURING THE ARNO RIVER
THIS IS MY FIRST DRAWING AS A PROFFESIONAL
HEHE
SHIVER
SHIVER
I'M HAPPY, SO IT'S NOT LIKE I MIND THE COLD OR ANYTHING

I DID IT!
THIS LOOKS GOOD!
IT WAS WORTH FACING THE COLD!
THERE IS STILL A LOT OF TIME LEFT BEFORE DELIVERY
ONCE MASTER LEO APPROVES MY SKETCH IT'S ON TO PAINTING THE REAL THING ON CANVAS.
AT THIS PACE I MIGHT FINISH WAY BEFORE THE DELIVERY TIME.
THAT WOULD BE NICE!
THIS IS THE LIFE!
EVERYTHING IS GOING SO WELL!

WHAT?
DO IT AGAIN
OF COURSE
DOING IT AGAIN! RIGHT AWAY!
OF COURSE NOT!
SHAKE
SHAKE
NO! NONO-NO!!
SHAKE
DID YOU THINK YOU WOULD FINISH IT IN ONE TRY?
WHAT SORT OF RESPONSE IS THAT?
"WHAT?"
FREEZE
LET'S DO THIS !!
OK!!
THERE IS NO WAY DRAWING PROFFESIONALY WAS GOING TO BE THAT EASY

GO DO IT AGAIN
NO
AGAIN
DO IT AGAIN
GLOOOOM
I CAN'T SEEM TO FINISH THE SKETCH AT ALL
WHAT SHOULD I DO
SO WHILE,
I'M OUT HERE MAKING NO PROGRESS, THE REST IS ALMOST DONE
UNTIL I FINISH, THAT PAINTING CANNOT BE COMPLETED
AND I DON'T THINK THERE IS THAT MUCH TIME LEFT...

CRUMPLE
IF I'M THIS BAD AT DRAWING THEN ...
MURMUR
MURMUR
MURMUR
...
EVEN THOUGH I'M AN ASSISTANT, I...
I'M JUST BEING A BURDEN TO MASTER LEO
MURMUR
MURMUR
MURMUR
FOCUS
I HAVE TO TRY HARDER!
WIPE


DO IT
AGAIN

WHAT?
EHM-
I-
WHAT'S WRONG?
THEN GET BACK TO WORK QUICKLY NOW.
I SEE
IT'S NOTHING
ER
UH
I
I HAVE TO DO MY BEST
I HAVE TO FINISH THIS QUICKLY
YES QUICKLY
WHOOSH

UM
I
WHAT'S WRONG?
UHM
M-MASTER LEO!

I AM JUST
BEING A BURDEN TO YOU MASTER LEO
I PREW IT SO MANY TIMES
BUT I JUST CAN'T DO IT
IF I GO ON LIKE THIS WE WON'T BE ABLE TO DELIVER ON TIME

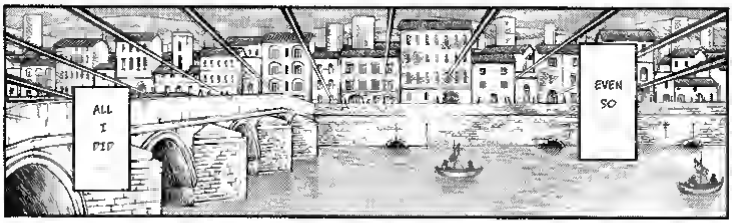
IT'S ONLY BACK GROUND AFTER ALL
SIAT
I COULD JUST ACCEPT WHAT YOU HAVE NOW
YOU KNOW
GRRRR
GICH

HEY
ARTE
BUT THAT LITTLE DIFFERENCE CAN CHANGE HOW SATISFIED YOUR CUSTOMER IS

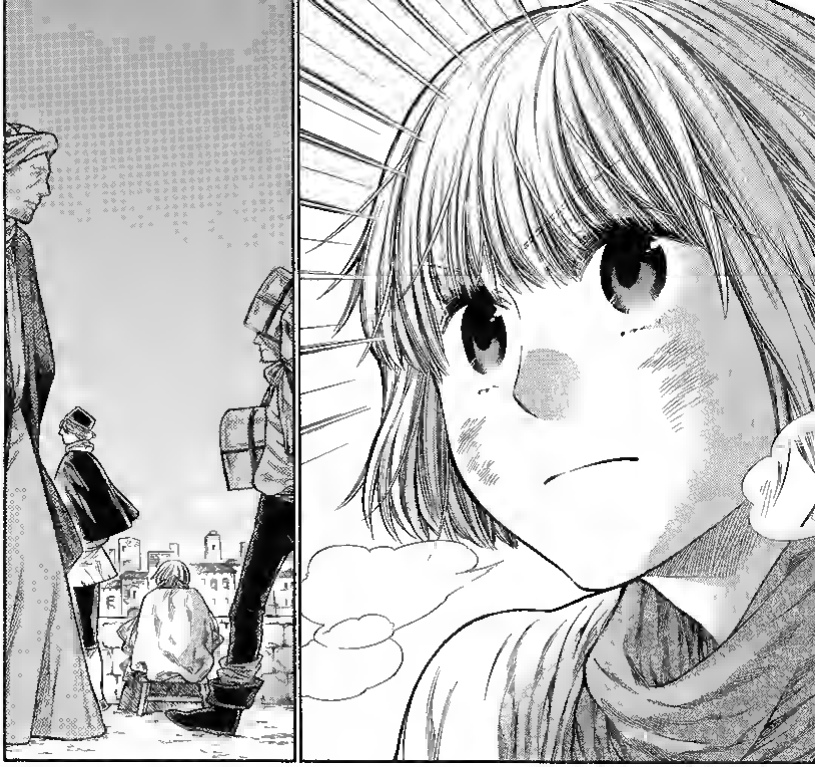
WHAT ARE YOU THINKING ABOUT WHEN DRAWING?
YOU
FOR WHO'S SAKE ARE YOU DRAWING?

WHAT I AM THINKING ?
FOR WHO?
I'LL
I...
I...
I'LL GO DRAW IT AGAIN!
THAT'S RIGHT

ALL I SHOULD HAVE BEEN THINKING OF
IS THE CLIENT THERE ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE FAINTING

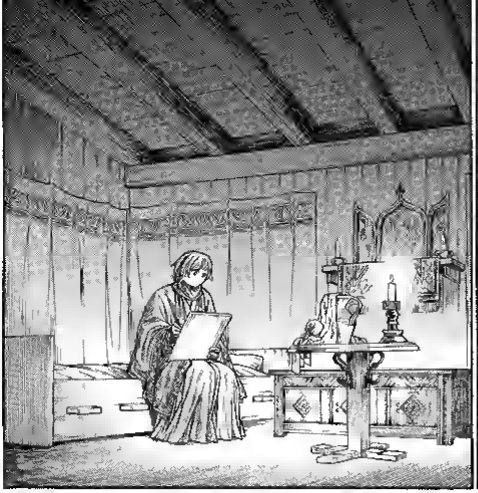

EVEN SO
ALL I DID

THINK ONLY OF MASTER LEO
AND MYSELF
ALL I DID WAS
SLAP
SLAP
SLAP
UH—UH



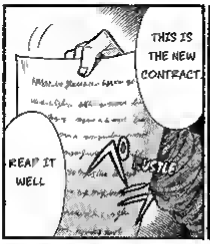
I DID—
YOU CAN START PAINTING DIRECTLY ON THE PANEL
THIS ONE WILL DO
OH

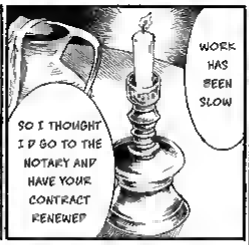
SERIOUS
YES
I WILL DO MY BEST
HUH
?
FROM THERE ON
WHO?
SHAKE
SHAKE
SHAKE
NOT DO IT YET THIS IS NOT THE TIME TO BE HAPPY
THE REAL WORK ONLY STARTS FROM HERE!
THE PAINTING THAT WAS MY FIRST WORK
BUT I MANAGED TO FINISH THE PAINTING ON TIME AND BEFORE I KNEW IT
IT WAS A HARD BATTLE TO FIGHT
WAS DELIVERED TO THE HANDS OF THE CLIENT
?



KNOCK
KNOCK

SCRITCH
SCRITCH


THIS IS THE NEW CONTRACT
READ IT WELL


WORK HAS BEEN SLOW
SO I THOUGHT I'D GO TO THE NOTARY AND HAVE YOUR CONTRACT RENEWED

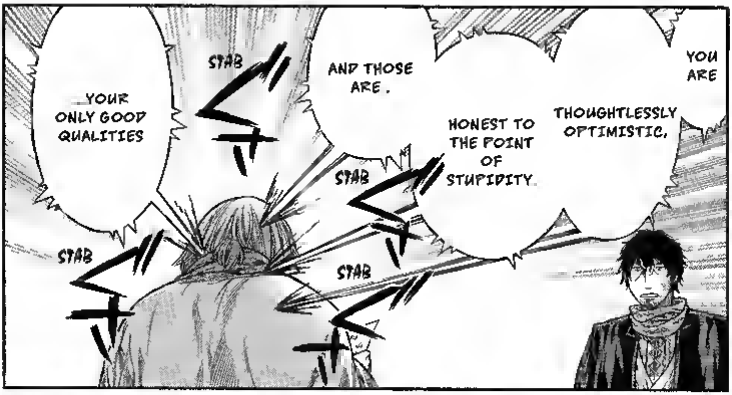
MASTER LEO!
WHAT'S WRONG?

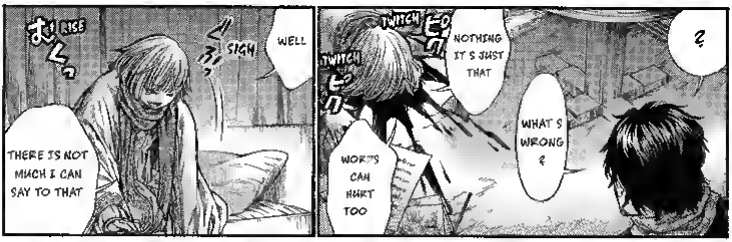
YOUR ANNUAL PAY WENT UP A LITTLE
WHAT?!

I DON'T WANT YOU STARTING A FIRE OR SOMETHING
OKAY BUT TAKE IT EASY
I CAN MAKE A LOT OF DRAWINGS AFTER WORK!
THANK YOU SO MUCH!
WITH THIS I HAVE ENOUGH MONEY LEFT TO BUY CANDLES

?
GLARE
SCRATCH
SCRATCH
ALSO

WOOSH
YOU REALLY THOUGHT YOU WERE BEING A SURFER?
FINGO
SMILED IT
DON'T BOTHER THINKING SUCH USELESS THINGS


YOU ARE
THOUGHTLESSLY OPTIMISTIC,
HONEST TO THE POINT OF STUPIDITY.
AND THOSE ARE.
YOUR ONLY GOOD QUALITIES
STAB
STAB
STAB
STAB


WELL
SIGH
RICE
THERE IS NOT MUCH I CAN SAY TO THAT
?
NOTHING IT'S JUST THAT
WHAT'S WRONG?
TWITCH
TWITCH
WORK'S CAN HURT TOO

WHAT?
I DON'T THINK I CAN REALLY AGREE WITH HER
OH?
IS THAT SO?
SHE OFTEN TOLD ME TO STOP LOOKING AT PAINTINGS AND WORK ON BEING MORE CHARMING AS A WOMAN
MY MOTHER OFTEN SCOLDED ME FOR BEING SO OBSESSED WITH PAINTING

I THINK THAT A WOMEN LIKE YOU...
...WAY MORE CHARMING
...TRULY IS...
JUST QUIETLY SIT THERE, OBEYING THEIR MEN LIKE DEAD EYED DOLLS ...
THOSE GIRLS THAT...

SLAM
SORRY FOR THE INTRUSION GET SOME SLEEP
ANY-WAY
I'M SURE ONE DAY A MAN OTHER THAN ME WILL TAKE NOTICE OF HER CHARM
IF SHE CONTINUES TO BELIEVE IN HERSELF AND STAND STRONG
WHAT?
WHAT?
HUH?
ERR W-WHAT?
WHAT?
WHAT?
HEARING AN ECHO OF HER FATHER'S WORDS... HER CHEEKS TURN A ROSY RED.